

**ESDP AND MISSILE DEFENSE:
EUROPEAN PERSPECTIVES
FOR A MORE BALANCED
TRANSATLANTIC PARTNERSHIP**

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Abstract Security cooperation with Europe has been the bedrock of American strategy for more than 50 years. Today, that relationship is undergoing both stress and refinement as Europe moves toward a more unified political and security identity, and as the United States responds to a changing global security environment. While many issues have the potential to complicate U.S.-European security cooperation, few are more pressing than the U.S. pursuit of missile defense and Europe's construction of European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP). The author explains the relationship between missile defense and ESDP. He shows that, rather than serving as wedges between the United States and Europe, both of these can help construct a better security relationship. In fact, transatlantic cooperation and understanding of these issues is necessary for either of them to succeed.		
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FOREWORD

Security cooperation with Europe has been the bedrock of American strategy for more than 50 years. Today, that relationship is undergoing both stress and refinement as Europe moves toward a more unified political and security identity, and as the United States responds to a changing global security environment. While many issues have the potential to complicate U.S.-European security cooperation, few are more pressing than the U.S. pursuit of missile defense and Europe's construction of European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP).

In this study Martin Agüera, a prominent German defense analyst, explains the relationship between missile defense and ESDP. He shows that rather than serving as wedges between the United States and Europe, both of these can help construct a better security relationship. In fact, transatlantic cooperation and understanding of these issues is necessary for either of them to succeed.

The Strategic Studies Institute is pleased to offer this study to help American leaders sustain and augment the crucial security cooperation with Europe.

DOUGLAS C. LOVELACE, JR.
Director
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SUMMARY

Are transatlantic relations currently in a crisis? The public debates over U.S. plans for a missile defense shield and European efforts to create a coherent and stronger military force might support such a thesis. However, as the author argues, transatlantic relations with NATO as its main security institution are not in a crisis. Rather, the European Security and Defense Policy as well as missile defense are transatlantic approaches, although not always commonly organized in the past, that seek to adjust to a more fragile international system. These new approaches have become necessary since the end of the Cold War, but only cooperation and mutual understanding for both projects will guarantee their final realization.

ESDP AND MISSILE DEFENSE: EUROPEAN PERSPECTIVES FOR A MORE BALANCED TRANSATLANTIC PARTNERSHIP

No Crisis, But It is Time for Talk.

Before the horrible terrorist attacks on the United States on September 11, 2001, one could easily have had the impression that transatlantic security relations were in a crisis. The immediate and overwhelming fight against international terrorism, in the aftermath of New York and Washington DC, has brought Americans and Europeans closer together again. Yet, two “hot topics” are still likely to dominate the political debates across the Atlantic and Europe in the foreseeable future, and both sides find it increasingly difficult to achieve a consensus on these important security and defense issues. It seems as if politics on both continents are dominated by a strong unilateralism when it comes to future security aspects, although—as this monograph will hopefully and convincingly show—these so seemingly different projects can *only* be realized in cooperation. What, however, are these topics that seem to have considerably cooled the political climate between the United States and Europe?

On the one hand, America fears that the prospect of creating a common European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP) with robust and flexible military forces for the future could undermine the NATO alliance. On the other hand, Europe is tempted to believe that U.S. plans for a National Missile Defense (NMD), or more recently simply referred to as Missile Defense (MD), could seriously put global strategic balance at risk by creating a new arms race. In addition to that, Europe claims such a system would undermine the Atlantic alliance as well since it would create different spheres of security within NATO. Given that the

claims of each side have some apparent merit, it is worthwhile to look deeper into these arguments. Despite the missile defense program still being in its technical and political infancy, it is currently the most hotly debated of the two programs.

ESDP and MD—Getting Priorities Right.

However, for the near future both sides of the Atlantic should focus with the same intensity, if not more, on the more eminent and realizable of the two projects: that is, creating capable European military forces to both strengthen NATO and enhance Europe's ability to operate with less heavy dependence on U.S. assets during multinational military operations. There looms the danger that the European goal of building military capacities could too easily be lost from sight through the overwhelming debate on MD. But just as important as missile defense is to protect against weapons of mass destruction by "states of concern," NATO, for instance, must be a strong and mission-ready alliance for future conflict resolution. The September 11 terrorist attacks and the following military fight against international terrorism in Afghanistan against the Taliban regime only give evidence to this.

It is therefore necessary to stress that ESDP will not undermine NATO. Since the end of the Cold War, U.S. decisionmakers have repeatedly expressed their approval of a Europe with advanced military capabilities. Political pressure from the United States, as well as negative experiences during resolution of local conflicts of the 1990s, has shaped significantly European awareness that inherent advanced military capabilities are necessary in order to preserve and to stabilize NATO.

NATO Will Not Be Hampered.

The United States as the world's only superpower cannot shape international security alone. Constant military commitments all around the globe have severely stretched

U.S. forces to their limit.¹ It needs capable partners and, at last, Europe has understood that. To support the United States should truly be Europe's aim. All of Europe has benefited too long from American protection and friendship that it could simply destroy these important political and cultural links. Countries that extraordinarily shape this European process like Germany or the United Kingdom appreciate transatlantic relations and would not let anything drift Europe away from the United States. In addition, they should be (and probably are) realistic enough to know that Europe, for many years to come, will not become whole and free without America's global security shield and military might.

At the same time, America should look at ESDP in a more relaxed and supporting manner.² One point of unnecessary confusion is the American call for "no duplication of assets"³ since this definition is relatively vague. One needs to make an important distinction between "unnecessary" and "necessary" duplications.

"Unnecessary Duplications."

The United States is right to urge Europe to be included in the ESDP process. Accordingly, Europe should guarantee America full transparency over what it does.⁴ That means the political and strategic planning process between the European Union (EU) and NATO on military issues should be merged.⁵ Creating separate political and military planning staffs that do not offer transparency over each other's intentions and plans is not useful. Therefore, whatever progress the European defense efforts are going to make in the future, they should be harmonized and coordinated with and possibly through NATO. In fact, the term European Security and Defense Identity (ESDI), that now basically turned into ESDP since the last important European Union summits in Helsinki and Cologne in 1999 and Nice in 2000, was originally given by NATO to satisfy America's demand of a more balanced burden-sharing role

of Europe *within* the alliance. Ever since that topic became a high priority on the political agenda of the EU and to its leaders (after Kosovo, the debate again very much heated up), the efforts gained a somewhat different dynamic. The U.S. policy of “NATO first” remains, but it appeared as if certain European countries regarded the intensified negotiations over ESDP as a way to create new institutions to keep the United States out of future European affairs. On this issue, however, European countries were deeply divided.

Whereas the United States clearly prefers the “top down approach,” meaning that Western security institutions are structured within a hierarchy that has NATO at its top, France, for instance, apparently wishes to maximize autonomy for ESDP. On the other hand, the United Kingdom, which regards itself as the closest European ally to the United States, has always made a strong case that NATO must remain Europe’s premier security institution. Therefore, Britain’s increased participation in the ESDP efforts should be regarded as a good sign in the United States. Most certainly, Britain will not try to create autonomous European defense forces that could endanger NATO.

Germany found itself in a somewhat awkward position, having problems clearly defining a position. It stood right in between its (probably) most important allies—the United States and France. Both of Germany’s partners expected it to take sides with their position, although the positions of the United States and France over the European defense efforts were—and probably still are—contradictory to each other. Consequently, Germany tried not to intimidate either ally by trying to formulate an approach that would satisfy both. This included positioning itself in favor of NATO. Finally, Germany declared that the transatlantic alliance remained the “cornerstone” and “the first address” for European security but, at the same time, emphasized that Europe would also have to build up capable forces in order to act when “NATO as a whole” would not want to

commit forces to a possible crisis scenario in Europe's backyard. However, Germany also declared that European would guarantee full transparency and close cooperation to NATO on the ESDP process.⁶

“Necessary Duplications.”

On the other hand, there are going to be “duplications.” Those may include operational assets that European nations are lacking or that could help to close existing NATO or even U.S. military gaps. Such “duplications” are all but worrisome. In fact, they are absolutely necessary. Without them, a strong European military pillar within NATO is clearly unthinkable. Just to name a few, Europe will procure a Future Transport Aircraft—the Airbus 400M. This can be viewed as a first step to build up desperately needed European strategic airlift capabilities. Although the United States possesses a quite admirable airlift fleet, the procurement of transport aircraft for European armed forces poses a “welcome duplication” for NATO as a whole.

For instance, the world's premier aerospace force, the U.S. Air Force (USAF), has identified significant shortfalls of airlift capabilities that disable meaningful support for the “stated national strategy of being able to win two widely separated Major Theater Wars fought in close succession.”⁷ In the words of former Air Force Secretary F. Whitten Peters, the USAF is “going to require more strategic airlift. Today, we cannot meet the wartime requirements we already have without accepting risk—and we never could—and our future requirements are growing.”⁸

The United States had a requirement of some 66 million tons miles per day during the closing days of the Cold War.⁹ Since the USAF could not attain this goal, it was subsequently lowered to some 49.7 million ton miles by the Clinton administration in 1993. However, even this lowered goal could not be met. In June 2000, for instance, the United States was 5.2 million ton miles short of meeting the 49.7 goal, while the real airlift requirement ranges between 51.1

and 67 million ton miles per day.¹⁰ Problems mainly arise from the high operations that Air Mobility Command units have with increasingly old aircraft such as the C-141 Starlifter and the C-5 Galaxy. Many of the C-5 aircraft require intensive maintenance and are often not available. Although their required mission readiness rate was supposed to be 75 percent, the C-5 fleet was only 63.3 percent mission ready in August 2000.¹¹ Even the USAF's new workhorse, the C-17 Globemaster, is not fully mission ready. Due to spare part shortages, etc., its availability rate only "ranged from 37.6 percent to 64.3 percent in 2000."¹²

The same necessity applies for increasing European air-refueling capacities. In order to sustain intensive air operations abroad and to mobilize NATO troops within short time, the Alliance must start duplicating such efforts as soon as possible. In sum, the U.S. General Accounting Office concluded that the U.S. Department of Defense "is short (1) over 29 percent of the needed military airlift capability, and (2) nearly 19 percent of the needed refueling aircraft."¹³ Maybe here lies one of Europe's real tasks; that is, increasing airlift capabilities for NATO while shaping its ESDP. It would greatly make sense since countries such as the United States are in process of transforming their armies to becoming more flexible and easily deployable forces for wartime scenarios.¹⁴ In order to realize these Army visions, a strong airlift capability is required—one that the United States cannot solely maintain. Besides the lack of airlift capabilities, such developments make a strong case for extended European strategic airlift in the future.

The ESDP process, however, will only lead to success if both the United States and Europe work together. What matters most in the end are the results. Dr. Hans Binnendijk put it correctly when he said, it "is no longer important whose aircraft, missiles, tanks, or shells are used in combat; as long as they are effective."¹⁵ Nonetheless, Europe must provide the bulk of the work this time. Only by credibly demonstrating¹⁶ their ambition to strengthen NATO will they receive the full and ample support of the

United States. At stake is nothing less than the future strength and credibility of the world's most successful military alliance. As retired General Klaus Naumann rightly emphasizes,

There should be no doubt in anyone's mind that Europe continues to need NATO to cope with all issues concerning the defense of Europe. If this is made unambiguously clear to our American allies, most of their concerns about Europe and the United States drifting apart could be put to rest.¹⁷

But it must also be clear to Americans that full equality cannot be met by Europeans in the near- or mid-term. Therefore, the United States should care less about the sometimes strong rhetoric, but make sure it teaches its allies well on how to take on *responsibilities*. In other words, it should continue putting pressure on Europe to spend more on defense to acquire *capabilities* that make them full-fledged partners with the United States when acting together. This remains important because "Europe," as General Naumann points out, still "could not contend with a dictator equipped with, at best, a third class armed force. The EU drew the right conclusions—and the progress achieved so far is truly remarkable—but much remains to be done to achieve even an initial ability to act."¹⁸

For instance, while European countries are proudly looking towards their soon-to-be operational Eurofighter aircraft, the United States is already testing and evaluating jets like the F-22 and the Joint Strike Fighter. In comparison to the American jets that might be operating with third, fourth, or fifth stealth generation, aircraft like the Eurofighter will still not have such an advanced technology at hand. That remaining technology and capabilities gap will force the United States and Europe into a temporary division of labor—a scenario of which Binnendijk warns us. But that "strategic divergence" must not remain a reality in the future because otherwise "major divergences across the Atlantic . . . could seriously trouble future coalition military operations. In a worst case

scenario, strategic divergence would lead to a point where Americans and Europeans would be unable to fight together.”¹⁹ Europe’s security was, is, and will remain linked to America’s security, and NATO is the institution that preserves this security. Neglecting such an important issue would only be self-destructive. But this also implies that American leadership is still critically needed. There are no reasons for the United States to be less engaged in European affairs in the future than it was in the past. Both the United States and Europe must keep this in mind.

Just Dreamers?—From SDI to MD.

During recent months, however, far more attention has been devoted to MD. The uproar and discussions it has created within political, scholarly, and media circles have been significant with regard to the yet remaining uncertainty and maturity of the program. However, the uproar is understandable due to MD’s global dimension that goes far beyond the creation of a regional European crisis reaction force. Yet, plans issued by the U.S. Government to deploy a missile defense to defend its homeland against ballistic missile attacks did not wholly come out of the blue. Instead, they just made another comeback—their fourth. In the 1960s, programs such as Sentinel or Safeguard entered the stage as a system of Intercontinental Ballistic Missile bases to protect “from the risk of a Soviet strike.”²⁰ During the 1980s, U.S. President Ronald Reagan recaptured the idea of creating a ballistic missile system that would render a Soviet missile attack on American soil useless. Reagan’s so-called Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI), then, did not become reality due to nonexisting technological feasibility, budgetary shortfalls, and, probably as importantly, the rather quick disappearance in 1991 of the overwhelming danger and rival it was supposed to be designed for—the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR).²¹ The end of the Cold War brought a fundamental new issue to the missile defense debate that still serves the United States as one of the most important reasons for building a MD: the danger of

accidental missile launches by states that have had access to the technology for creating Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD). This U.S.-Russian cooperation program, brought to life by then U.S. President George H. W. Bush and Russian President Boris Yeltsin, was called Global Protection Against Limited Strikes (GPALS)/Global Protection System (GPS). But the soon-to-be following Democrat administration under President William J. Clinton rejected the plan, favoring research conducted on building theater missile defenses that would protect U.S. forces during military operations overseas.²²

Nevertheless, the topic made its way back to the political agenda. Although it had never really disappeared from the scene, the discussions reappeared with a rather shocking report by the Commission dated July 15, 1998, to assess the Ballistic Missile Threat to the United States, which later became known as the “Rumsfeld Report.” The commission concludes ballistic missiles armed with WMD payloads pose a strategic threat to the United States. This is not a distant threat. Characterizing foreign assistance as a wild card is both incorrect and misleading. Foreign assistance is pervasive, enabling, and often the preferred path to ballistic missile and WMD capability.

A new strategic environment now gives emerging ballistic missile powers the capacity, through a combination of domestic development and foreign assistance, to acquire the means to strike the United States within about 5 years of a decision to acquire such a capability (10 years in the case of Iraq). During several of those years, the United States might not be aware that such a decision had been made. Available alternative means of delivery can shorten the warning time of deployment nearly to zero.

The threat is exacerbated by the ability of both existing and emerging ballistic missile powers to hide their activities from the United States and to deceive the United States about the pace, scope, and direction of their development and proliferation programs.

Therefore, we unanimously recommend that U.S. analyses, practices, and policies that depend on expectations of extended warning of deployment be reviewed and, as appropriate, revised to reflect the reality of an environment in which there may be little or no warning.²³

As if this report needed any confirmation, a few weeks later on August 31, 1998, North Korea shocked the world by launching a Taepo-Dong I missile over Japanese waters. This incident not only profoundly changed the security-political situation in North East Asia,²⁴ but it also stirred the NMD debate in the United States. North Korea's actions intensified and justified America's plans for a MD, as a statement by former U.S. Secretary of Defense William S. Cohen underlines, "The Taepo-Dong-1 test was another strong indicator that the United States will, in fact, face a rogue nation missiles threat to our homeland against which we will have to defend the American people."²⁵

The continued debate over MD has created different schools of thought among America's allies, partners, and within the United States itself, that range from fully supporting the idea of a MD,²⁶ to questioning its overall technical feasibility,²⁷ to arguing that MD could create different spheres of security with NATO, should it indeed be limited to a "national" program,²⁸ to believing that MD would create new global arms races. Despite all troubles that MD may face and despite all its critics and worries, the new Bush administration made it clear to the international audience that the program is to be pursued at high speed. Should the Bush administration—at least during its first 4 years in government—not receive an unmistakable blueprint that a missile defense system will under no circumstances work, they will continue pursuing it—no matter what.²⁹ Henry Kissinger, former U.S. Secretary of State, put it point-blank to the international audience at this year's Munich Conference for Security Policy, "No American president can neglect an alternative to using nuclear weapons against a small nation poised to launch a ballistic missile at the United States."³⁰

For America's allies and partners, this has major implications.³¹ It leaves them principally with two options only: to participate in realizing MD, or not to participate.

The Way Ahead—Expanding the Idea of an MD to the Allies.

However, the latter is *not really* an option for Europe. The reason for this is twofold. First, the threat assessment is real. Different international scholars agree that the threat posed by WMD will unmistakably rise during the next decades.³² Currently, some 25-plus countries possess ballistic missiles. Out of these, only two have intercontinental ballistic missiles, but that number may soon be rising. Additionally, over 75 countries have or are able to produce cruise missiles. While the United States is not severely threatened by missiles coming from long distances, the likelihood of a short-ranged terrorist sea-launched attack increases.³³ Not surprisingly, the United States as the world's only superpower feels the need to protect itself against such upcoming and already existing threats, as Antulio J. Echevarria II describes,

A WMD attack, whether delivered overtly by missiles or covertly by other means, could result not only in massive casualties, disruption or degradation of information infrastructures, contamination of public health systems and foodstuffs, and degraded response capabilities, but also in economic damage, loss of strategic world position, social-psychological damage, and undesirable political change.³⁴

Indeed, many European observers hold the view that it is indeed a legitimate desire of the United States to explore ways to defend itself against growing threats.³⁵ Additionally, the knowledge that the proliferation of WMD has risen and will continue to rise renders the argument that MD would create new arms races in two ways irrelevant. The existence of a missile defense belonging to the United States and its allies and partners might, in fact, discourage "states of concern" from using them. Besides, the "absence of missile defense does not seem to have retarded

WMD and missile proliferation over the last 30 years.”³⁶ Then, only two states (Russia and China)—against whom NMD is not directed—could possibly create an arms race with the United States. All other “states of concern” would simply bankrupt themselves in a “defensive-offensive arms race with the United States.”³⁷

Second, through the strong bond of NATO alliance, Europe and the United States are strategic partners. If “states of concern” should be threatening the American homeland with nuclear, chemical, or biological weapons, they would be posing the same, if not even more inherent, threat to European security.³⁸ While the identified “states of concern”³⁹ might still have to undertake some efforts for another 5 to 10 years in order to credibly threaten American soil with long-range missiles, their arsenal of middle-range or even short-range (depending on from where the missiles are being launched) is able to reach European soil.

Is this a valid threat assessment for European states? It is. NATO’s war for Kosovo in 1999 served as a turning point for Europe since it made clear that by fighting its first “war” outside of its principal territory, NATO and its European members might be asked to become more active in terms of using military force in “out-of-area” operations. Clearly, such an extended role would be favored by the United States that could well need the support in terms of maintaining international security abroad. Should NATO, in fact, not be able to fill such a role in the future, it might even become a useless institution to the United States, some argue. Likely scenarios and places of future military conflicts for NATO operations lie at Europe’s insecure periphery (e.g., North Africa, Caucasus, Middle and Near East)—exactly in areas where experts also expect a significant rise in the production of WMD. By acting in a war coalition along with the United States, Europe could easily become a target for states with WMD, not being able to reach America itself but able to severely hurt its allies. Therefore, out of self-interest, Europe would do well to address this danger and to cooperate with the United States on MD. At this year’s

Munich Conference on Security Policy, Friedrich Merz, Chairman of the Christian Democratic Union/Christian Socialist Union group in the German parliament, urged the German government to embrace MD and help make it an “Allied Missile Defense” (AMD), rather than simply a U.S. “National Missile Defense” program.⁴⁰

In fact, Merz’ view is likely to be closer to the truth than anything else. The political implications of such a system go way too far to limit it to a purely national missile defense system designed to only protect the United States. Over the course of the MD debate, it became obvious for U.S. and European experts alike that an extended defense shield is the only feasible way to “sell” missile defense to the world—not just to America’s closest allies in order to cooperate but also to prospective “rivals” to avoid new arms races.⁴¹ Nevertheless, the question remains: How can such an AMD or MD be realized?

Create a Limited or Theater Missile Defense System for Now.

A major issue that determines the realization of this project is the scope of the planned missile defense system. Limited missile defenses or something closer to a widened Theater Missile Defense (TMD) could, for the foreseeable future, be the best way to generate a consensus among America and its allies and partners. James Lindsay and Michael O’Hanlon, senior fellows of the Brookings Institution and missile defense experts, made a convincing case for a limited, two-tier system. Such a system, both argue, would limit the total number to 200 defensive interceptors, which would be in accordance with the ABM-Treaty.⁴² A first tier, a boost-phase system either land-, sea-, or air-based, would be located relatively close to the “states of concern” from which a WMD attack by missiles would be most expected. Such a system seems the most feasible since:

enemy missiles are easiest to locate when their rocket motors are burning, and there are few countermeasures to foil a boost-phase intercept because it is difficult to hide or mimic a large, burning rocket. By contrast, midcourse defenses like the one the Clinton administration proposed attempt to intercept warheads in space. But the cold vacuum of space makes it extremely difficult, given the foreseeable state of sensor technology, to distinguish between decoys and the real thing.⁴³

However, boost-phase is less than perfect. One difficulty could be the basing of such systems. Given the relatively short time one has to shoot down the missile while in its boost-phase, basing has to be relatively close to the “states of concern” and covering all possible angles of attack. For most “states of concern,” such a basing could possibly be found (North Korea, Iraq, Libya), but probably not for all (Iran). Depending on which way the missile tracked, they could escape from such a boost-phase system.

For that reason, a second tier, a small mid-course system, is proposed.

Given the uncertainties about whether a boost-phase defense could be deployed near all threatening states or whether it would be 100 percent effective in practice, it would be prudent to supplement any boost-phase defenses with a midcourse interceptor system based on U.S. territory. NATO allies might also consider deploying such a system in central Europe.⁴⁴

Its main purpose will be to intercept any incoming missiles that might have made their way past the boost-phase intercept.

This concept seems promising because it is a modest and reality-based scenario description. The threat posed by “states of concern” is, without question, existing, but yet, most of these countries’ capabilities to launch a mid-range or long-range attack with intercontinental ballistic missiles are limited. (Therefore, an SDI or “Star Wars” scenario of a overwhelming missile defense does not make sense and would be unnecessarily expensive and provocative.) Their capabilities are limited in a way that at least “two, and probably three or four, interceptors would be desirable for

each enemy missile. Assuming a worst case scenario of three possible threatening countries, four interceptors per missile, and up to 12 ICBMs per country makes for a total of almost 150 boost-phase interceptors.”⁴⁵

For European nations operating with tight defense budgets that are unlikely to vastly increase in the foreseeable future, such a limited version of missile defense would give them a chance to play an active part in developing and constructing such a system. For Russia, which has also officially recognized the threat posed to its homeland by WMD, a TMD-like missile defense would comfort worries that the United States might be longing for global governance and invulnerability with MD. In the case of Russia, it will increasingly become a task for Europeans to safeguard that U.S.-Russian relations do not worsen over the debate on missile defense. Countries such as Germany can and should use its favorable contacts to both the United States and Russia to help find a consensus over a truly important topic.⁴⁶ Again, threats posed by WMD are not solely affecting America but also Europe. To waste too much time in heated debates would not serve the case. However, both countries have to discuss and find consensus to a possible new arrangement of the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty or further reduce the number of nuclear weapons on both sides to accommodate an agreement on missile defense. Yet, the most important issue here will certainly be to make a strong case for including Russia in missile defense talks and taking Russia under a unified missile defense umbrella later on.

Such cooperation could be offered to China as well, but here remains a major obstacle with a possible TMD system as a preliminary missile defense. China views TMD as a grave problem since it could put the status quo in the Taiwan question—namely Chinese military superiority over Taiwanese capabilities—at risk.⁴⁷ Accordingly, this will require intense strategic dialogues with the Chinese in the future as “America’s relationship with China is one of the key foreign policy challenges”⁴⁸ that the international

community, not just the United States alone, faces in the 21st century. However, since the United States believes that China, “irrespective of what we do on NMD, will in fact modernize and increase its ICBM capability,”⁴⁹ the deployment decision of a missile defense system will not be drawn exclusively on this issue.

Conclusion.

In conclusion, a few worthy points should be summed up. Transatlantic relations are in no crisis,⁵⁰ but Europe and the United States are reorganizing their security structures. These are changes that have become necessary with the end of the Cold War and that are affecting not just international security as a whole but also the world’s most successful military alliance.

ESDP and MD are transatlantic approaches, although not always commonly organized, that seek to adjust to a more fragile international system characterized by many intrastate conflicts with severe human rights violations or the proliferation of WMD by weak states, terrorist groups, etc. The 1990s have vividly demonstrated this new, fragile international system. They have also demonstrated that, more than ever before, an alliance such as NATO is the key to safeguarding not just transatlantic security, but also international security.⁵¹ There is no replacement for it—not now nor in the foreseeable future. Its member states must do all to safeguard this important cornerstone to international security and avoid all that could drive wedges into the common bond.

For Europe, this discussion has brought up two major conclusions: First, it must shape up its *rhetoric* as far as ESDP is concerned. Europe must reassure the United States at all times that ESDP is a worthy project which is to support the NATO alliance, maintain transatlantic partnership, and not just create a standing European army out of frustration over American hegemony. Then, Europe should, in any case, delete the word “autonomous” from its

vocabulary because it is a contradiction. Europe's unified defense efforts will create everything but an "autonomous" force compared to NATO or U.S. military superiority. Wherever the Europeans might be called upon to intervene militarily, they will be in need of NATO and, subsequently almost certainly, U.S. assets in order to prepare, to conduct or to sustain their mission. Light peacekeeping operations may pose a difference here since Europeans have well proven themselves in Bosnia or Kosovo where they carry the bulk of responsibility today. Yet, every other type of military intervention which succeeds peacekeeping in scope or intensity—such as peace enforcement or war-fighting interventions⁵²—will be a bridge too far for European capabilities alone.

The second implication, arguing from a moralistic standpoint, is embracing the transatlantic relationship as one of the luckiest things that has happened to the West in the last 100 years. Europe has simply far too long benefited from American protection and friendship. The transatlantic relationship was overall characterized through sincere cooperation, not animosity. Of course, American leadership within NATO served both sides and interests. It preserved America's influence in Europe, but served European interests as well. Europeans knew all too well that there was a strong partner at their side whenever they may have needed one. Now, the time has come to possibly rebalance this transatlantic relationship—again, in favor of both sides. It is in the interest of the United States to have a militarily stronger partner in Europe. This interest not only stems from the fact that the United States will shift much of its security policy efforts away from Europe to Asia in the coming years, but also because U.S. forces were, for decades now, heavily committed worldwide. This has partly put at risk America's ability to maintain an overwhelming military force due to a very high operations tempo. Europe, on the other side, cannot continue the path it has been walking on for too many years. "The degree of dependence on the United States is unhealthy."⁵³ It must build a strong

European Expeditionary Force that can be rapidly deployable and still make a meaningful contribution for the whole spectrum of crisis reaction operations. However, the Europeans should not focus on creating such a European Expeditionary Force primarily for peacekeeping operations, but rather designed for high-intensity warfare operations comparable to a 1991 Gulf War scenario. Leaning on American concepts such as the Air Expeditionary Force of the USAF could be helpful in this regard.

As far as the United States is concerned, it should continue pursuing its plans for a missile defense, though in a more cooperative and limited manner. The reasoning for a missile defense, as was made unambiguously clear, is the growing threat through the proliferation of WMD in the hands of actors that are not controllable by international norms. For that reason, the strategy of deterrence as we know it, is indeed no longer enough. Accordingly, the advocates of missile defense made the right strategic assessment by claiming that international treaties such as the ABM-Treaty need modification. President George W. Bush explained correctly in his May 2, 2001, speech at the National Defense University why that is the case,

Like Saddam Hussein, some of today's tyrants are gripped by an implacable hatred of the United States of America. They hate our friends, they hate our values, and they hate democracy and freedom and individual liberty. Many care little for the lives of their own people. In such a world, Cold War deterrence is no longer enough. . . . We need new concepts of deterrence that rely on both offensive and defensive forces. Deterrence can no longer be based solely on the threat of nuclear retaliation. Defenses can strengthen deterrence by reducing the incentive for proliferation.⁵⁴

But, at the same time, this should not mean that the ABM Treaty has become obsolete. It needs modification due to the changed international security circumstances, but it was and should remain a very important controlling measure for global disarmament between two nations, the United States and Russia, that still possess thousands of

intercontinental nuclear missiles. With the modest deployment of a missile defense system and by agreeing to cut back further nuclear arms, the United States could make a significant step forward in achieving a consensus with Russia.⁵⁵ A one-sided withdrawal from the ABM-Treaty by the United States would resemble a “foreign policy disaster” since:

Russia would respond by abandoning its commitment under the START-2 Treaty to slash its nuclear forces and by suspending bilateral programs designed to secure and destroy its ageing arsenal. Russia’s more than 5,000 strategic nuclear warheads still pose the single largest threat to Western security, and the possibility that terrorists might steal a Russian nuclear weapon remains a grave concern.⁵⁶

In addition to that, the build-up of a missile defense will not happen unilaterally for several reasons. A fully operable system will most likely end up being a “protection package” for a number of countries that work along with the United States. Only through cooperation with close allies and partners can a missile defense receive the international consensus it is still lacking today. “Even Mr. Big needs friends” to realize all this.⁵⁷ Having reached such a consensus, we could indeed be living in a safer world, if as many states as possible finally benefit from such a limited missile defense umbrella. Certainly, the United States can neither undertake all initiatives alone nor can it be best friends with everybody. However, the United States has an enormous responsibility within the international system and missile defense is a topic that is extraordinarily affecting it. For a positive outcome of this process, the United States must pave the way for it, along with its allies and friends. With this, in return, the United States could pass the ball back to its closest allies. Europe’s understanding and support will be extremely helpful, as Dr. Simon Serfaty rightly points out.

The transatlantic partnership need not be made hostage of a consensus over NMD, but Europe’s support for, and involvement with, (N)MD development and deployment

will help. Our European allies and friends often misunderstand the U.S. interest in NMD as a replay of past debates over missile defenses or as the hidden reflection of a continued interest in disengagement. The reverse is true on both accounts: missile defense is the down payment for a major debate over the nature of deterrence in the 21st century, and it is a precondition for the continued engagement of U.S. forces abroad during and beyond the coming decade.⁵⁸

Then, creating the currently most-feasible missile defense system—that is favoring the so-called “boost-phase” system—the United States would need many allied nations to station radar stations or missile defense systems close to those “states of concern.” Intimidating the allies or partners means losing their support for a missile defense and that could most likely equal no workable missile defense at all.

Cooperation, as well as vivid communication, will be the key to creating the new transatlantic partnership in the future that equals the strong transatlantic bond we had in the past. The strategic parameters of the international system—not a new conclusion—have changed. However, this does not automatically mean the end for an alliance such as NATO or benevolent transatlantic relations in general. In fact, it does mean exactly the opposite. Since the areas of responsibility for the United States as the world’s leading nation have increased, especially after September 11, the responsibilities for the Europeans as important allies have increased as well. The increased number of possible and actual conflict areas have shown that nothing can replace multinational military operations, once the military is called upon to resolve a crisis. No Western country will use its military unilaterally unless the survival of its country is at stake. Yet, much of NATO’s continued prosperity and that of transatlantic relations as a whole will strongly depend on its member countries and their will and ambitions to keep these important ties effective.

ENDNOTES

1. David S. Yost well pointed out that “America’s European allies would be well-advised to recognize the limits to U.S. military power and the multiplicity of U.S. security commitments in other regions of the world. U.S. military power is finite.” See David S. Yost, “The NATO Capabilities Gap and the European Union,” *Survival*, Vol. 42, No. 4, Winter 2000-01, p. 111. For additional reading on this topic, see Martin Agüera, “The Transatlantic Way Ahead. U.S. Readiness Problems Show Why European Capabilities Will Be So Important,” *Comparative Strategy*, Vol. 20, No. 3, July 2001, pp. 271-276.

2. Flora Lewis, “To Counter Trans-Atlantic Drift, Let’s Talk Face to Face,” *International Herald Tribune*, April 6, 2001.

3. In fact, this phrase was extended by then U.S. Secretary of State Albright to the so-called three d’s—no decoupling, no duplication, no discrimination. See Madeleine Albright, “The right balance will secure NATO’s future,” *Financial Times*, December 7, 1998. However, the main fear for Americans over the whole duplication debates seems to be that the European Union might create its own military and planning staffs that could leave the United States outside the information loop on ESDP.

4. A claim that Charles A. Kupchan of the Council of Foreign Relations also makes. See Charles A. Kupchan, “In Defense of European Defense: An American Perspective,” *Survival*, Vol. 42, No. 2, Summer 2000, p. 23.

5. For a more in-depth analysis of this point, read Yost, pp. 112-115.

6. This topic is extensively and superbly discussed in Franz-Josef Meiers, *Europäische Sicherheits- und Verteidigungsidentität (ESVI) oder Gemeinsame europäische Sicherheits- und Verteidigungspolitik (GESVP)?*, Discussion Paper C79, Bonn: Center for European Integration Studies, 2000.

7. John A. Tirpak, “A Clamor for Airlift,” *Air Force Magazine*, December 2000, p. 24.

8. *Ibid.*

9. The term “ton mile” means the airlift capability required for the movement of one ton a distance of one nautical mile. See Keith Hutcheson and U.S. Rep. James Saxton, “U.S. Military Needs More

Airlift. Speed, Ability To Deploy Severely Hampered," *Defense News*, February 12, 2001, p. 15.

10. *Ibid.*

11. Tirpak, p. 28. See also Seena Simon, "Fuselage Cracks Appear Throughout Galaxy Fleet Continues Doubts About Transport's Future Reliability," *Defense News*, December 18, 2000, p. 44.

12. Seena Simon, "U.S. C-17 Globemasters Fall Short on Tests of Reliability," *Defense News*, March 12, 2001, p. 13.

13. *Military Readiness: Air Transport Capability Falls Short of Requirements*, NSIAD-00-135, Washington, DC: U.S. General Accounting Office, June 23, 2000, <http://www.gao.gov/cgi-bin/ftechrpt?rptno=NSIAD-00-135>, accessed April 11, 2001.

14. Daniel Gouré, "Army Leads Transformation. Shinseki Moves Past Talk To Build Revolution," *Defense News*, February 26, 2001, p. 32; David L. Grange, "Full-Spectrum Transformation-Now! Void In Army's Maneuver And Mobility Capability Must Be Filled," *Armed Forces Journal International*, March 2001, pp. 46-47; Barry M. Blechman and Zachary Lum, "Rethinking Transformation. Army's Ground-Power-Dominant Concept Undercuts Potential Full-Dimensional U.S. Warfighting Capabilities," *Armed Forces Journal International*, March 2001, pp. 38-42; Huba Wass De Czege and Antulio J. Echevarria, "Precision Decisions. To Build A Balanced Force, The QDR Might Consider These Four Propositions," *Armed Forces Journal International*, October 2000, pp. 54-56.

15. Hans Binnendijk, "A Trans-Atlantic Division of Labor Could Undermine NATO," *International Herald Tribune*, April 7, 2001.

16. In other words, Europe's rhetoric must be backed with concrete action that clearly points toward ESDP being a supportive element to NATO and takes some heavy military burden from America's shoulder. Countries significantly pushing Europe's process ahead (France, Germany, United Kingdom) must avoid having the United States feel the emergence of ESDP as some kind of "frustration" to American hegemony. For a good discussion, read Michael Rühle, "Transatlantische Dissonanzen. Sieben Thesen zu den Sicherheitsbeziehungen," *Internationale Politik*, April 2000, pp. 43-46.

17. Klaus Naumann, "Implementing the European Security and Defense Policy: A Practical Vision for Europe," Speech delivered to a joint conference of the Atlantic Council of the United States/National

Defense University, Washington, DC, August 2000, <http://www.acus.org/Publications/bulletins/internationalsecurity/naumann.pdf>, accessed April 14, 2001.

18. *Ibid.*

19. See Martin Agüera, "European Budgets Hold Key to Trans-Atlantic Relations," *Defense News*, April 2, 2001, p. 28.

20. Bruno Tertrais, *U.S. Missile Defense. Strategically sound, politically questionable*, working paper, London: Centre for European Reform, April 2001, p. 5.

21. Joachim Krause, "Kommt der kleine Bruder von SDI? Die amerikanischen Pläne für ein nationales Raketenabwehrsystem," *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, June 3, 2000.

22. Tertrais, p. 5.

23. *Executive Summary of the Report of the Commission to Assess the Ballistic Missile Threat to the United States*, Pursuant to Public Law 201, 104th Congress, Washington, DC, July 15, 1998; <http://www.brook.edu>.

24. Sebastian Harnisch, "Erst verhandeln, dann rüsten? Die nordkoreanische Bedrohung in der amerikanischen Raketenabwehrdebatte," *Raketenabwehr-Bulletin No. 14*, Frankfurt: Peace Research Institute, Summer 2000, p. 2, <http://www.hsfk.de/fg1/proj/abm/bulletin/pdfs/harnis1.pdf>, accessed April 6, 2001.

25. *Ibid.*, p. 3.

26. Ivo H. Daalder, James M. Goldgeier and James M. Lindsay, "Deploying NMD: Not Whether, But How," *Survival*, Vol. 42, No. 1, Spring 2000, pp. 6-28.

27. See, for example, Richard L. Garwin, "A Defense that Will Not Defend," *The Washington Quarterly*, Summer 2000, pp. 109-123; and Edward Luttwak, "Raketen-Trugschluss. Die amerikanische Sehnsucht nach einseitiger Sicherheit wird nicht erfüllt werden," *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, July 7, 2000.

28. For a good overview, see Karl-Heinz Kamp, "Specious NMD Arguments Stress Trans-Atlantic Relations," *Defense News*, August 21, 2000, p. 15.

29. Another possibility for not pursuing NMD could, of course, also be if the economic power and wealth of the United States would decrease rapidly.

30. Joseph Fitchett, "Bush Can't Afford to Ignore Missile Defense, Envoys Tell Europeans," *International Herald Tribune*, February 6, 2001.

31. In this context, the author limits the term "allies" mainly to Europe and, here specifically, NATO member countries, "partners" in the most benevolent way to countries such as Russia and China.

32. See, for example, Richard Meng, "Nach der Abschreckung. Auch auf die Europäer kommt mit NMD eine Entscheidung zu," *Frankfurter Rundschau*, February 3, 2001, p. 7; Karl-Heinz Kamp, "Nukleare Proliferation. Neun Thesen zur Weiterverbreitung von Kernwaffen," *Internationale Politik*, November 2000, pp. 43-46; *Global Trends 2015: A Dialogue About the Future With Nongovernmental Experts*, NIC 2000-02, Washington, DC: Central Intelligence Agency, December 2000, <http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/globaltrends2015/index.html>, accessed January 5, 2001; "Chemiewaffenprogramm ausgeweitet," BND: Auch Fortschritte beim Bau von großer Trägerrakete im Irak," *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, February 24, 2001; Nikolas Busse, "Atombomben auf Berlin und München? Die Proliferation von Raketen hat sich in den vergangenen zwanzig Jahren merklich beschleunigt," *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, February 15, 2001.

33. Antulio J. Echevarria II, *The Army and Homeland Security: A Strategic Perspective*, Carlisle Barracks, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, March 2001, pp. 2-6.

34. *Ibid.*, p. 5.

35. See the report of Dr. Karl A. Lamers, *Das Nationale Raketenabwehrsystem (NMD) und sein Folgewirkungen für die Allianz*, Brussels: North Atlantic Council, October 6, 2000, p. 17.

36. David C. Gompert and Klaus Arnhold, *Ballistic Missile Defense. A German-American Analysis*, Berlin: RAND Europe and Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, January 2001, p. 13.

37. *Ibid.*, p. 14.

38. Martin Agüera, "Vom U.S.-Raketenschutzschild profitieren auch die Europäer. Deutschland kann Russland ins Boot ziehen," *Die Welt*, February 16, 2001; and Joachim Krause and Oliver Thränert,

“Raketenabwehr und nukleare Abrüstung gehören zusammen,” *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, February 14, 2001; *wysiwyg:/ /34/ http:/ /www.weltpolitik.net/policy-forum/article/212.html*, accessed April 10, 2001.

39. In the U.S. debate on NMD, these so-called “states of concern” include Iraq, Iran, North Korea, Libya, and Syria.

40. Remarks by Dr. Friedrich Merz at the 37th Munich Conference on Security Policy, Munich, February 3, 2001.

41. James Rubin, “Keine U.S.-Alleingänge bei der Raketenabwehr. Bush sollte NMD eng mit Europa und Russland abstimmen, sonst droht ein neues Wettrüsten,” *Financial Times Deutschland*, February 6, 2001; Hans Binnendijk, “How to Build an International Consensus for Missile Defense,” *International Herald Tribune*, March 7, 2001; Ivo H. Daalder and James M. Lindsay, “A Chance to Make Moscow a Defensive Partner,” *International Herald Tribune*, March 7, 2001; and Lothar Rühl, “Das Ende des exklusiven Bilateralismus. Warum ein strategischer Dialog zwischen Washington, Moskau und Peking zwingend zu sein scheint,” *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, February 28, 2001.

42. James Lindsay and Michael O’Hanlon, “Defending America: A Plan for a Limited National Missile Defense,” *Policy Brief #70*, Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution, February 2001, *http:/ /www.brook.edu/comm/policybriefs/pb070/pb70.htm*, accessed April 27, 2001.

43. *Ibid.*

44. *Ibid.*

45. *Ibid.*

46. See Oliver Thränert, “Europa sollte sich hüten, zu Amerika auf Distanz zu gehen. Unterstützung heißt jedoch nicht, Washingtons neue Politik kritiklos gutzuheißen—Bündnispartner sollten weiter an Rüstungskontrolle festhalten,” *Die Welt*, April 10, 2001.

47. Xuewu Gu, “China kann sich ein Wettrüsten nicht leisten. Die amerikanischen Pläne für ein Raketenabwehrsystem gefährden das geopolitische Gleichgewicht im Asien-Pazifik-Raum,” *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, April 9, 2001.

48. U.S. Senator Jon Kyl, “U.S.-China Strategic Relationship,” Speech delivered on the Senate Floor, Washington, DC, March 30, 2001,

http://www.defensenews.com/current/doc/Kyl_China_Speech.doc, accessed April 10, 2001.

49. In the words of former U.S. Secretary of Defense, William S. Cohen. See Kyl, "U.S.-China Strategic Relationship."

50. For quite a different perspective, see Christopher Layne, "Death Knell for NATO? The Bush Administration Confronts the European Security and Defense Policy," *Policy Analysis*, No. 394, Washington DC: Cato Institute, April 4, 2001, <http://www.cato.org>.

51. One example is the second Gulf War 1991. Although NATO as an alliance did not fight this war, many member countries supported the lead country, the United States, in freeing Kuwait.

52. In order to understand the various dimensions of the different types of military interventions, see the great discussion by Richard N. Haass, *Intervention. The Use of American Military Force in the Post-Cold War World*, Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment, 1994.

53. Agüera.

54. Remarks by the President to students and faculty at National Defense University, Fort Lesley J. McNair, Washington DC, May 1, 2001, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2001/05/20010501-10.html>, accessed May 2, 2001.

55. See Michael O'Hanlon, "ABM Treaty Under Attack," *The New York Times*, April 26, 2001; and Lee Feinstein, "Russia the key to missile plan," *The Baltimore Sun*, May 9, 2001.

56. Ivo H. Daalder and James M. Lindsay, "Unilateral Withdrawal From the ABM Treaty Is a Bad Idea," *International Herald Tribune*, April 30, 2001.

57. Josef Joffe, "America über Alles? Take Care, Even Mr. Big Needs Friends," *International Herald Tribune*, April 16, 2001.

58. Dr. Simon Serfaty, "The U.S.-European Relationship: Opportunities and Challenges," Testimony Before The International Relations Committee Subcommittee on Europe, Washington, DC, April 25, 2001, <http://www.csis.org>, accessed April 30, 2001.

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